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From: The New York Times [nytdirect@nytimes.com]
Sent: 9/19/2019 5:49:01 AM
To: Calvino, Maria Soledad [Calvino.Maria@epa.gov]
Subject: Your Thursday Briefing




The New York Times

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Morning Briefing

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jueves, sep. 19, 2019 | [View in browser](#)

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Good morning.

We're covering the emergence of a photograph of **Canada's prime minister in brownface**, the latest on **Israel's election results** and a threat by President Trump against **San Francisco**.



By Chris Stanford



"I recognize it was something racist to do, and I am deeply sorry," Justin Trudeau said on Wednesday. Sean Kilpatrick/The Canadian Press, via Associated Press

'I'm going to be asking Canadians to forgive me'

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau apologized on Wednesday after a photograph surfaced of him wearing brownface makeup at an "Arabian Nights"-themed party in 2001. He faces national elections next month.

Mr. Trudeau, who began his re-election campaign last week, confirmed that he was in the image, dressed as Aladdin. The picture was taken during a gala at a school where Mr. Trudeau, then 29, was a teacher.

Reaction: Canadians of South Asian and Middle Eastern descent have been an important source of support for Mr. Trudeau's Liberal Party. Andrew Scheer, the Conservative leader and Mr. Trudeau's main challenger in the Oct. 21 vote, said the picture reflected "someone with a complete lack of judgment and integrity, and someone who is not fit to govern this country."

Background: The episode drew comparisons to the scandal this year involving Gov. Ralph Northam of Virginia, when a photograph of a man in blackface surfaced from his medical school yearbook 35 years earlier.



President Trump and Robert O'Brien, the new national security adviser, in Los Angeles on Wednesday. Evan Vuori/Associated Press

President Trump considers action against Iran

Mr. Trump on Wednesday discussed a range of responses to the recent attacks on Saudi oil facilities, from "the ultimate option" of retaliatory strikes against Iran to welcoming the country's leader for a visit. He also promised to impose more sanctions.

To help sort through the options, Mr. Trump named Robert O'Brien as national security adviser, replacing John Bolton. Mr. O'Brien, a former lawyer with limited government experience, was most recently the State Department's chief hostage negotiator.

Related: During a visit to Saudi Arabia, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo accused Iran of an "act of war," the strongest American condemnation yet of last weekend's strikes. Mr. Trump has indicated that he would like to avoid a military conflict over an attack that killed no Americans.

Center gains strength in Israel's election

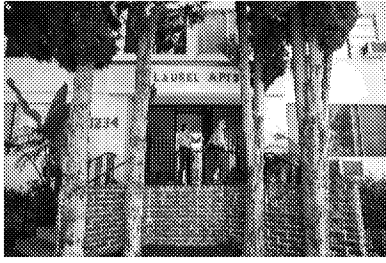
"While the country remains deeply divided, the forces of unity have gained an edge," our correspondents write in a news analysis.

Near-final results of this week's voting showed the centrist Benny Gantz with a slight edge over Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, whose government had been beholden to the hard right and the ultra-Orthodox.

The details: The coalitions of Mr. Gantz and Mr. Netanyahu each took the same number of seats, according to unofficial results. But Avigdor Liberman, Mr. Netanyahu's former deputy, won a kingmaker's role.

What's next: Mr. Gantz and Mr. Liberman have advocated a broad coalition and said they would not join a right-wing government that depended on ultra-Orthodox support.





Ed Buck's apartment complex in West Hollywood, Calif., on Wednesday. Jenna Schoenefeld for The New York Times

A drug lair, a trickle of bodies, and an activist's arrest

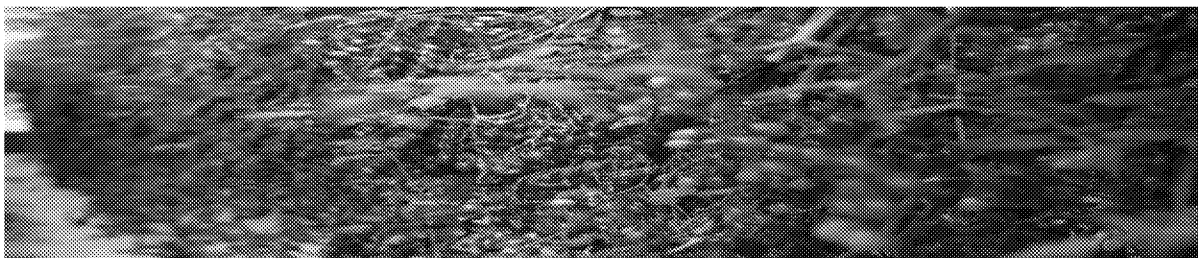
Since 2017, two men have died at the home of Ed Buck, who was a fixture in Democratic political circles in Los Angeles. The authorities said both had suffered accidental drug overdoses.

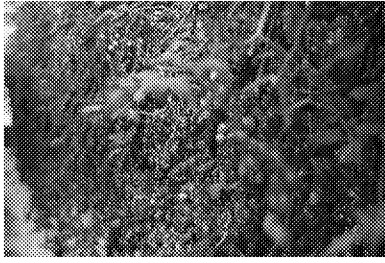
This week, a third man survived an overdose in Mr. Buck's West Hollywood apartment. Prosecutors charged Mr. Buck with operating a drug house and accused him of being a "violent, dangerous sexual predator."

Background: Mr. Buck gave tens of thousands of dollars to California Democrats, though not enough to be classed as a major donor. He also contributed to the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee in 2016, and to both Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama.

If you have 4 minutes, this is worth it

How Brexit could break Britain's food chain





Suzie Howall for The New York Times

Britain is set to leave the European Union on Oct. 31, at a time of year when the country imports most of its food. The uncertainty created by Brexit could mean dayslong border delays — and rotten produce.

A Times reporter and a photographer traveled 1,700 miles to see what it takes to get tomatoes from a small town in Sicily to London.

PAID POST: A MESSAGE FROM CAMPAIGN MONITOR

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A drag-and-drop email builder, a gallery of templates and turnkey designs, personalized customer journeys, and engagement segments. It's everything you need to create stunning, results-driven email campaigns in minutes. And with Campaign Monitor, you have access to it all, along with award-winning support around the clock. It's beautiful email marketing done simply.

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Here's what else is happening

U.S. seeks to penalize San Francisco: President Trump said the city would be issued a notice of environmental violation because of its homelessness problem, citing used needles that were ending up in the ocean.

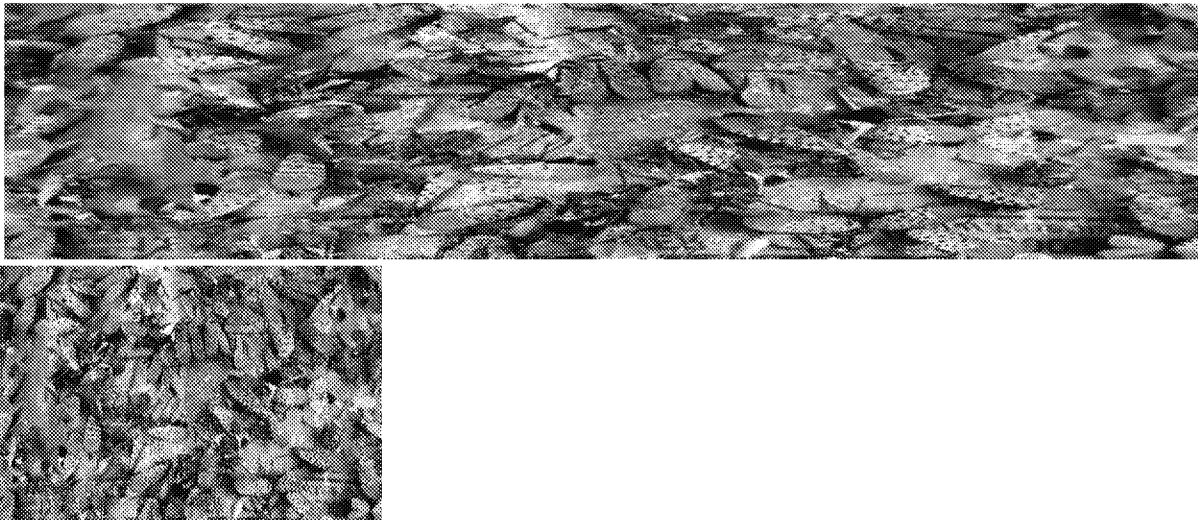
Acquittals in Fukushima disaster: Three former power company executives in Japan were cleared of criminal negligence today for their roles in the meltdown of a nuclear plant in 2011 after an earthquake and a tsunami.

Another rate cut: Acknowledging concerns about a weakening economy, the Federal Reserve lowered interest rates by a quarter of a percentage point, its second cut since late July.

Climate activist in Congress: The Swedish teenager Greta Thunberg urged lawmakers “to listen to the scientists” about climate change. Young people are expected to push for action during protests around the world on Friday.

New child nutrition guidelines: Children under 5 should drink mostly milk and water, and shouldn't consume sweetened drinks, according to a panel of scientists.

“Victim-1” sues Epstein estate: A woman who said she was the first victim listed in the federal indictment of Jeffrey Epstein offered a graphic account of abuse at his hands.



Daniel Vasta for The New York Times

Snapshot: Above, spotted lanternflies on a flytrap in Pennsylvania this week. Hordes of the invasive insects, which attack vineyards, have led the state to quarantine 14 counties and offer advice to residents: “Squash it, smash it ... just get rid of it.”

Overlooked obituaries: Elizabeth Gloucester operated boardinghouses in Brooklyn and beyond, and was widely considered the richest black woman in America when she died in 1883. She's the latest entry in our series about people who didn't receive obituaries in The Times.

Late-night comedy: President Trump noted that Saudi Arabia paid in cash for American weapons. “Wait, they paid you \$400 billion in cash?” Seth Meyers asked. “I think they’re scamming you, dude.”

What we’re reading: This Vice piece about a cooking legend. Our food writer Tejal Rao writes: “Cecilia Chiang immigrated to San Francisco in the 1960s and opened a restaurant that expanded the American understanding of Chinese cuisine with the super sophisticated dishes of her youth. I love that her big life lessons, at the age of 99, include drinking Champagne at lunch.”

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Now, a break from the news





Mark Weinberg for The New York Times

Cook: Comfort is a slice of [apple skillet cake with salted caramel frosting](#).

Go: At once deeply Swiss and intrinsically international: [Our latest 36 Hours column explores Geneva](#).

Watch: The directors of “It Chapter Two” and the coming “Doctor Sleep” know a lot can go wrong with film versions of Stephen King’s work. [Here’s what they learned](#).

Read: Alliterative and unexpected toppings appear in “Pete the Cat and the Perfect Pizza Party,” which is fresh this week on our [children’s picture book best-seller list](#).

Smarter Living: If you’re taking children on a flight, [pediatricians have some advice](#), such as keeping kids’ medications in your carry-on and not seating children on the aisle, where heavy bags could fall.

And many day care centers have outdated guidelines on pink eye. [Here’s what parents should know](#).

And now for the Back Story on ...

School backpacks

Pack heavy items close to your back. Use both shoulder straps. And carry no more than 10 percent of your weight.

These are some of the ABCs of school backpacks from the American Occupational Therapy Association, which declared Wednesday to be National School Backpack Awareness Day.

(The group also has ergonomic advice on purses, briefcases and suitcases.)



It's the season for backpacks. Jessica Fons for The New York Times

The first lightweight nylon backpacks appeared around 1967, designed by JanSport and Gerry Outdoors for hikers and, uh, backpackers. But college students soon started to adopt them. By the 1980s, backpack companies were making them specifically for textbooks.

The packs filtered down through the grades and around the world, replacing the book straps, satchels and school bags of earlier eras as an indelible part of a student's identity.

That's it for this briefing. See you next time.

— Chris

Thank you

Melina Delkic helped compile today's briefing. Mark Josephson, Eleanor Stanford and Chris Harcum provided the break from the news. Victoria Shannon, on the briefings team, wrote today's Back Story. You can reach the team at briefing@nytimes.com.

P.S.

- We're listening to "[The Daily](#)." Today's episode is the second of a two-part series about a new book on Harvey Weinstein by two Times reporters.
- Here's today's [Mini Crossword](#), and a clue: Game for which there are more possible iterations than atoms in the universe (five letters). [You can find all our puzzles here](#).
- The Times's Travel section has a new column, [Tripped Up](#), that offers advice on travel disasters.

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